

R.U.1.2? Wants YOU to Quit Smoking

Burlington's R.U.1.2? Queer Community Center has received an \$20,000 grant to work on helping LGBTQ tobacco users to quit or non-users not begin a relationship with the addictive product.

According to Center Director Christopher Kaufman, the grant grew out of collaborative work in 2001 on an anti-tobacco video, called "Fresh Attitudes." Moira Cook, the state's chief Tobacco Control Chief, remembered that work and wrote in the money for R.U.1.2? as a community partner in addressing at-risk and marginalized populations.

"LGBT subpopulations are a priority for the CDC right now," Kaufman said – at least when it comes to combating the negative health effects of tobacco use. He credited the

National Association of LGBT Community Centers with educating the CDC on the higher risk of becoming addicted to tobacco faced by lgbt teens and adults through data gathering and documentation of the need.

The Vermont Department of Health (VDH) has had "a low-level anti-tobacco collaboration" with R.U.1.2? for some time now. "VDH supported our Pride booth and provided a number of items for us to distribute," Kaufman said, including bright pink water bottles and anti-smoking playing card packs.

The Center plans to integrate 'tobacco cessation' information into its existing M4M.net health program on the Internet – which solely addresses men – and the Vermont Diversity Health Project, publishers of the lgbt-friendly guide to practitioners, *Our Bodies, Our Minds*. Under the Diversity



Health Project, the program would distribute lgbt-oriented anti-tobacco information to doctors and clinics and make copies of the "Fresh Attitudes" video available.

"We can use the tobacco information as a hook to introduce our lgbtq cultural com-

petency services to more practitioners," Kaufman explained. "We'll be following up the tobacco information with calls offering training. All healthcare practitioners are concerned about smoking."

One of the resources the Center is using is a booklet called "Out & Free," copyrighted in 1995. It draws analogies between the strength needed for and the phases of both coming out as lesbian, gay or transgender and quitting smoking. Attempts to view the website associated with the program brought only error messages, suggesting that the online support is no longer available. Kaufman said the booklet is being updated.

Potential resources are listed on the NALGBTCC website, www.lgbtcenters.org.

Giving It Up for Music: Ted Looby Moves On

Burlington – After four years as the indispensable administrative assistant/office manager for the Samara Foundation, Ted Looby is moving on. He'll be "following his bliss" as a musician, a co-career he has pursued alongside his office duties.

"Yeah, I'm moving to the low-paying life of a musician," Looby said with a laugh. "And I

hope to finally get my degree at the Berklee School of Music. I'd like to see where this goes." He is studying music production.

Being a straight ally in a gay foundation, he said, "has challenged perceptions about the foundation and about me. I've never fit into a mold: I married a black woman and our kids are mixed race, I live in an artists' coop, so why not

be a straight man in a gay foundation?"

Looby, a Vermont native, was working at the now defunct Trinity College in 2000 when he met Samara Foundation Director Bill Lippert and was hired away, "just in time for the 2000 election."

He added, "It has been amazing working here with Bill and the various board members who have cycled through. They're quite a collection of thoughtful and intelligent people."

Linda Markin, a long-time member of the Samara Foundation's

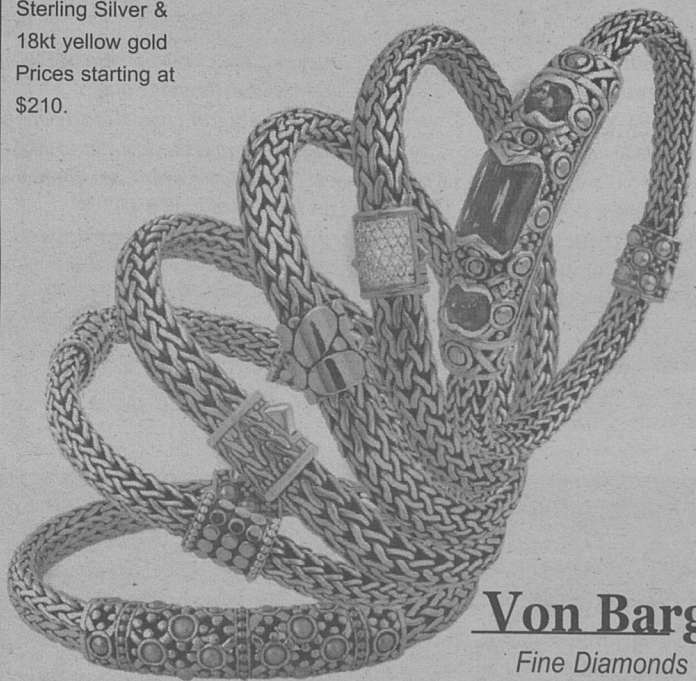
Board of Directors, including stints as president and vice president, had this succinct comment regarding looby's impending departure: "It's a bummer." She continued, "We'll miss his skills, his humor, his humility, and his grasp of lgbt issues, even to the point of being mistaken for gay. We've done a lot more than we thought we could," thanks to Looby's talents.

Looby's stint at Samara ends at the end of November. Lippert is seeking applicants for the job. "I'm excited for Ted," the foundation director said, "and I personal-

ly will miss working with him. What he brought to Samara far exceeds his technical ability. My only consolation is that he's pursuing his life's passion. I'm happy for him and will miss him terribly. I know that he will continue to be a part of our communities in new and different ways." ▼

Ted and Winnie Looby perform together as Color Complex. Their next appearance is Nov. 5 (8 pm – see Calendar) at 135 Pearl in Burlington.

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